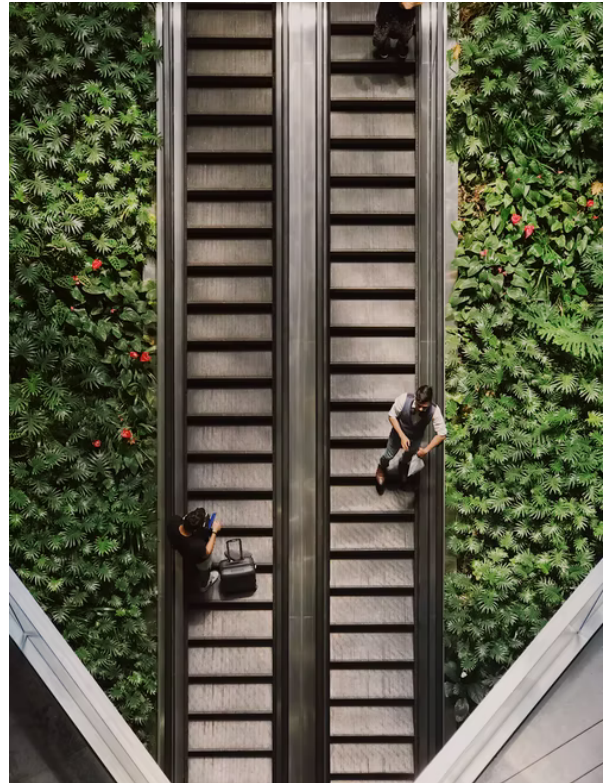


Organizational Sustainability Assistance Program Report



Ethan Redden, Melissa Ferruso,
Carrot Wang, Anna Oestreich, & Rachel Walker

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Executive Summary

As climate change continues to put immense pressure on humanity, businesses are also facing pressure from the outside world to do their part in adopting more sustainable business practices. However, not all businesses have the resources and capacity to change. In light of the upcoming executive decisions being made on behalf of the city's Climate Action Plan, Smart Columbus reached out to the OSU EEDS capstone students to explore ways to help those vulnerable businesses and organizations become more resilient and capable of increasing sustainability. Our team was tasked to seek existing business sustainability initiatives and practices in cities around the country that could help business and nonprofit organizations in Columbus strengthen their position in addressing climate change.

The objectives that guided our research were to identify local contexts for sustainability assistance, conduct case studies of assistance programs, and, based on the research findings, develop recommendations for the City of Columbus to accelerate their organizational sustainability efforts. A total of 14 analytical case studies of assistance programs were compiled from Denver, Tempe, Seattle, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and New York, as well as from federal and national programs. The main finding from these case studies was that five main categories of services are pertinent to sustainability assistance programs: information, technical assistance, network, recognition and promotion, and infrastructure strengthening.

Our team's recommendation to the City of Columbus is to develop an organizational sustainability assistance program tailored towards businesses and nonprofits in Columbus. To help the City construct and facilitate this program, we developed a program design that illustrates its structure and elements, the process for building the program, the goals and strategies for the

program success, a list of services they may provide, and a comprehensive summary of the existing resources that could work in tandem with the program.

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to identify components of existing business sustainability programs and strategies around the USA that can assist Columbus in meeting the goals of the city's Climate Action Plan. To achieve this, three research objectives were established. The first was to understand the local needs and capabilities for business sustainability support. The second was to develop case study reports on effective sustainability assistance programs with a minimum of five programs in five different cities. The last objective was to create concrete and definitive recommendations for the City of Columbus based on the sustainability assistance programs found in our research.

Our motivation is to ensure businesses and organizations have the tools necessary for adapting to a decarbonized and regenerative economy. Consumers are increasingly sensitive to the sustainability efforts of the businesses they choose to support. Unfortunately, many small businesses and nonprofits lack the resources or labor necessary to become more sustainable on their own. At The Ohio State University, we have learned that sustainability encompasses equity, the environment, and the economy, all of which are considered in this project. We hope to support the City of Columbus in this sustainable business initiative to accelerate the transformation advocated by the city's Climate Action Plan.

This project seeks to address action plans 2 and 7 through 13 (*Climate Action Plan n.d.*). These action plans would be dynamically addressed with an organizational sustainability assistance program. The action plan focuses on five distinct areas: development of a clean energy

economy, enhancement of partnerships, sustainable building management, sustainable transportation management, and sustainable waste management. Each of these foci can be supported with direct communication and resources for small businesses and nonprofits.

Our research revealed various goals and strategies that other cities have implemented successfully and may be useful in Columbus. This informed our suggested program design and program development process. Together, these resources reflect the key functions and strategies that formed our program implementation plan discussed later in this report.

Research Findings

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

The first step to gaining perspective on sustainability assistance programs was to understand the goals, needs, and challenges that small businesses and nonprofits face. Our research began with analyzing the city's Climate Action Plan and the Greenspot survey data collected from over 50 businesses and nonprofits regarding their organizational sustainability goals and barriers to implementation. We compiled available resources and initiatives, and interviewed sustainability professionals, relevant governmental agencies, and coalitions in Columbus. Among those interviewed were the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, GreenSpot, and SocialVentures. Through our interviews we learned that a lack of funding and capacity, impacts of COVID-19, and inefficient operations are the main threats that make increasing sustainability a challenge. Such sustainability programs are not the top priority for

most small businesses and nonprofits despite the overall interest in increasing their organizational sustainability.

From the Greenspot survey results, we learned that a large number of respondents indicated funding, not knowing where to begin, and COVID-related complications were their biggest barriers to implementing new sustainability programs. Nearly 70% of survey respondents were unaware that sustainability programs existed in Central Ohio (*Fig. 1*). It is important to note that we do not consider this a product of ineffective programs in Columbus, but rather an opportunity to strengthen existing programs by increasing awareness, lessening the burden on businesses, and growing networks between local groups.

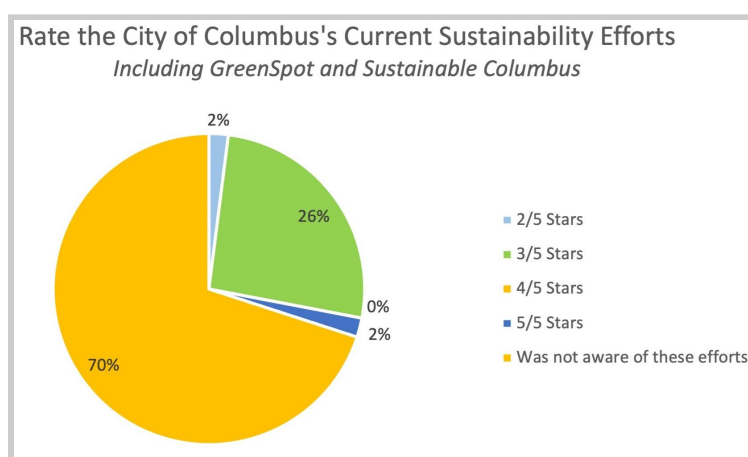


Figure 1. Organizational sustainability survey result that indicates a lack of awareness of the already existing sustainability opportunities in Columbus.

From interviews with Smart Columbus, SocialVentures, and GreenSpot, we gained insights into the many efforts that local sustainability groups are making in Central Ohio, as well as challenges they face. SocialVentures, the support center for social enterprises in Columbus, suggests that there has been a surging number of mission-driven businesses and nonprofits. Therefore, our recommendations would harness innovation and the drive for social change from social enterprises. GreenSpot is making great strides to increase membership, recognize

businesses' commitment to sustainability, and encourage the community at large to Go Green.

With increased resources and labor, GreenSpot could have the potential to rival any of the larger sustainability programs throughout the country.

We identified the opportunities from the Climate Action plan to help normalize sustainable business practices. There are nine action objectives directly related to organizational sustainability (*Fig. 2*), including alternative commuting, commercial on-site clean energy, emission reduction, green jobs, green economy, financial security, and business engagement. These goals and the plan as whole allowed us to develop recommendations that could harness this opportunity of support.

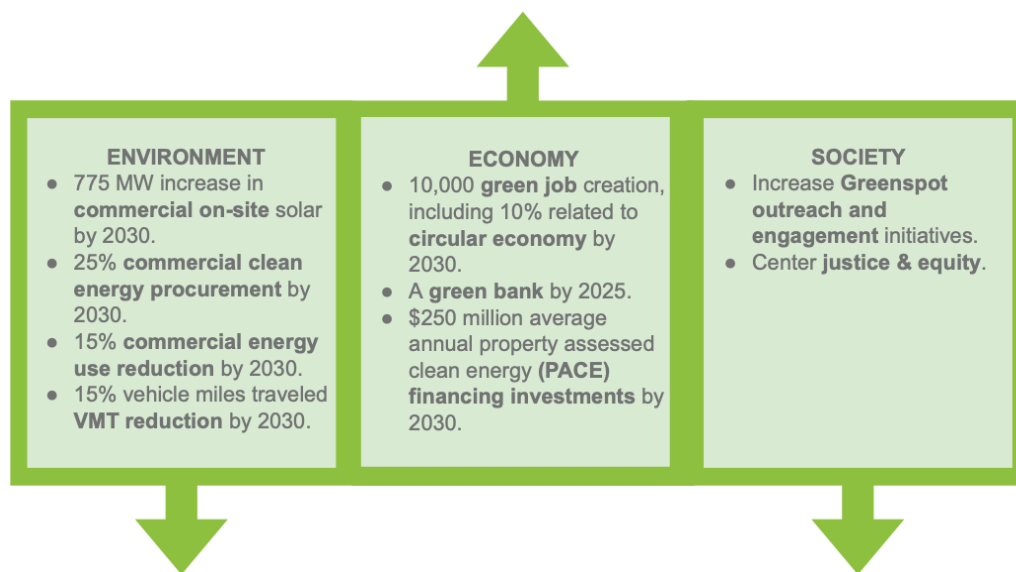


Figure 2. Action objectives directly related to organizational sustainability.

Incorporating our in-depth background research, we developed a SWOT analysis of organizational sustainability that illustrates the strengths and weaknesses, as well as threats and opportunities, for small businesses and nonprofits in Columbus to be more sustainable. Our analysis reveals that businesses have a low capacity for commitment to business sustainability programs. They also experience an information gap which could be remedied by strengthening

sustainability networks and making businesses aware of existing resources. The full SWOT analysis can be found in Appendix I.

In addition to background research, we analyzed existing organizational sustainability programs in cities throughout the country to assess services that were most effective and implementable in the City of Columbus. The following section details these case studies.

CASE STUDIES¹

Our research suggests that the most successful sustainability assistance programs fall into one or more of the following categories: Technical Assistance, Recognition/Promotion, Network, Information, and Infrastructure (*Fig.3*). Business assistance programs in these categories show a commitment to reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, while expanding sustainability networks and ensuring climate equity. Detailed information about these assistance categories can be found in Appendix II.

While many of the highlighted programs in this section fall into several of the categories listed above, we chose to highlight them under the category or categories in which the program most excelled or is most applicable to Columbus. We hope that these tried-and-true programs can serve as a template for the City of Columbus as it navigates the robust task of achieving carbon neutrality. We researched national organizational assistance programs in an effort to understand the larger network of sustainability assistance initiatives for businesses. For an overview of the capabilities of each program we researched please see Appendix III.

¹ *The following catalog of resources is not duplicated in the References section.*

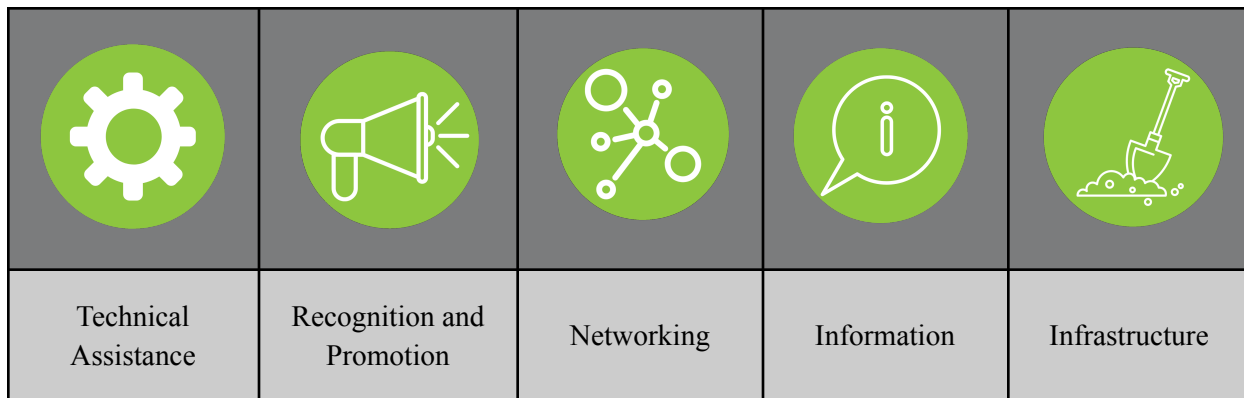


Figure 3. Five categories of assistance found in successful business sustainability programs



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

It is important that business owners measure their environmental impact when beginning a sustainability program. Technical Assistance programs provide business owners access to audits, compliance checks, reporting and certification, as well as options to partner with third parties for additional access to technical assistance programs. Aspects of the following technical assistance programs have the potential to be implemented in Central Ohio.

1. [The NYC Accelerator Program](#) was created to assist business and building owners' efforts to comply with NYC's Local Law 97 (LL97) of an 80% GHG reduction by 2050. It provides owners access to technical assistance programs to help improve efficiency in buildings while saving energy and money in the areas of: heating, air sealing & insulation, lighting, water, heat pumps, cooling, renewable energy, and technology primers. It also provides access to their [LL97 Carbon Emissions Calculator](#) which estimates a building's carbon budget as prescribed in LL97. Furthermore, it allows business and building owners access to a [NYC Energy and Water Performance Map](#) which provides real-time energy and water usage throughout all of NYC.

2. The [Small Business Environmental Assistance Program](#) (SBEAP) in Minneapolis is a part of the national SBEAP program which stemmed out of the 1990 Clean Air Act amendment. It is designed to help give small businesses resources to not only comply with regulations but to also go above and beyond environmental regulations. There is a list of resources businesses use depending on their industry type and environmental concern. The best part about this program is [Beyond Compliance](#) which offers resources, examples, and links to help businesses not only achieve compliance with the law but go beyond for both customer recognition and professional certification.
3. Colorado's [Certifiably Green Denver](#) program helps businesses verify that they are compliant with all acceptable environmental standards, engage in their workforce to continue improving their environmental and social impacts, and publicize their accomplishments.
4. [The EnviroStars program](#) is a state-wide green business certification program based in Washington. In addition to helping businesses become certified, it offers free technical assistance including conducting food waste assessments, climate leadership education, and connects businesses to rebates and resources.



RECOGNITION AND PROMOTION

Many successful sustainability programs utilize recognition and promotions to highlight and reward businesses who have taken steps, or even go above and beyond, to operate sustainably and reduce their environmental impact. Recognition can come in several forms, such as the right to display a certification sticker in a business window, awards ceremonies and press releases, and promotions of a directory of sustainable businesses to consumers.

1. [The NY Green Business Program](#) is a free and voluntary program that provides recognition and benefits to environmentally conscious businesses and other entities in New York State. To be a member, a business must have a good record of compliance with environmental laws and regulations, have a written sustainability statement, commit to either 2 or 3 (depending on the size of the facility) environmental service projects, and communicate their commitment to sustainability to their employees and the public. Benefits include free access to technical assistance from the [NYS Pollution Prevention Institute](#), use of the NYGB logo, networking opportunities with New York's top leaders in sustainability, and business promotion via press releases, public events, and a page on the NYGB website.
2. The California Green Business Network works with organizations to be [certified as a "Green business"](#) for them and receive promotion and support from the public agencies and utilities that serve them.
3. The [Seattle Good Business Network](#) connects the public and organizations to a [directory](#) of hundreds of certified local organizations broken into categories based on their service and type, along with featured ones listed at the top and individual pages for each organization.
4. EnviroStars's [green business certification program](#) offers three tiers of recognition and various marketing benefits to businesses at each sustainability level: Partner, Leader, and Champion, determined by a point system.
5. Colorado's [Environmental Leadership Program](#) run by the Department of Public Health and Environment is focused purely on recognition of sustainable businesses that go

beyond environmental regulations. They offer three levels of awards, bronze, silver and gold.



NETWORKING

Networking is crucial to the overall success of programs created to drive sustainability. When businesses, government agencies, and media outlets combine efforts they stand to be more efficient in scaling positive impacts. It is also where collaboration and innovation emerge, when organizations and people are able to connect with like-minded individuals to share wisdom. Additionally, networking allows program administrators to determine which parts of programs have been most effective while ensuring the less effective components are discarded.

1. The Minneapolis [Small Business Environmental Assistance Program](#) (SBEAP) is a local chapter of the national SBEAP community. Through monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings, SBEAPs are able to discuss and share helpful ideas regarding small business assistance. Columbus is also connected to this national network through the SBEAP within the Ohio EPA.
2. The [NYC Accelerator Program](#) connects NYC building owners with contractors who are experienced in building codes and laws and how to future fit the Buildings in NYC to reduce emissions in accordance with the [Climate Mobilization Act](#). An [Interactive Incentive Map](#) connects businesses and business owners with programs available in their area to plan, design, build, or retrofit buildings to be more efficient and sustainable.
3. The NY State Pollution Prevention Institute has a partnership with five area colleges with whom they work alongside on [research and development](#) projects to solve real-world

problems that businesses face. They also collaborate with businesses, nonprofits, and the community to achieve sustainable solutions in a most equitable way.

4. The [Seattle Good Business Network](#) is committed to strengthening the local food pipeline in forging the agenda for a resilient, sustainable, and just local food economy, through an [online, free community network](#) that connects stakeholders of the local food industry.
5. Funded by the WA Department of Ecology, Seattle Good Business Network hosts an annual [circular innovation challenge](#) that has attracted over 200 attendees to innovative circular ideas/practices, from manufacture to business operation to art, in combating climate change.
6. The [Seattle Good Business Network](#) facilitates a [materials marketplace](#) that helps local manufacturers, recyclers, and entrepreneurs easily share available alternative sustainable materials, identify reuse opportunities, and exchange underutilized materials. It aims at repurposing hard-to-recycle waste and by-products.
7. The [Seattle Good Business Network](#) fosters a [network](#) of green business leaders and programs that meet local needs by putting people and places first. Topics and focus of expertise range from democratization of finance, to equitable policies, community building, and to local business flourishing.



INFORMATION

Navigating the numerous laws, ordinances, and policies that exist in every city can be daunting for a business owner. Many business assistance programs provide members access to the resources necessary to ensure they remain in compliance. These resources can include classes, training programs, and educational materials, as well as direct consulting with experts at

a free or reduced cost. Citizens simply haven't had the quality nor the quantity of information they need to respond adequately to the problem (Johnson & Wilkinson, 2020).

1. The [Small Business Environmental Assistance Program](#) in Minneapolis offers an accessible and comprehensive [website](#) that features laws, policy, and environmental requirements for general businesses as well as specific industry types. It links businesses to other entities that conduct compliance training and provides free consultation over the phone.
2. The [The NYC Accelerator Program](#) provides training, access to case studies from previous projects, tips on ways to comply with the [Climate Mobilization Act](#), and a [Policy Toolkit](#) designed to help other cities to develop their own programs to support global climate action.
3. Through the many problems that they have worked to solve, the [NY State Pollution Prevention Institute](#) has created a free library of ready-to-use resources accessible to the public. The [library](#) includes eBooks, fact sheets, interactive tools, publications, reports and videos.
4. As self-proclaimed problem solvers, New York State Pollution Prevention Institute provides New York's businesses, nonprofits, and communities with the tools and solutions to realize the economic, social, and environmental benefits of sustainability. Its website displays all of the [case studies](#) from past projects as well as free information on [how to begin](#) a project, from the initial assessment and solution development, to implementation and follow-up.

5. California Green Business Network offers a comprehensive [public resource website](#) featuring environmental-related resources and information filtered by geographic location, category, and resource type (e.g. case study, checklist, fact sheet, etc).
6. [Seattle Good Business Network](#) provides a resource website - [Community Capital](#) which aims at guiding local businesses looking for community-based capital. The website covers community-sourced capital topics, offers case studies, local and national resources, and examples of businesses that have used these tools.
7. [Seattle Good Business Network](#) provides an [interactive digital platform](#) to educate the public about the circular economy. This platform features videos, articles, and case studies of various related topics, such as consumer behavior, technology, agriculture, etc.
8. [Seattle Public Utilities Green Your Business](#) informs businesses on environmental regulations/requirements and helps them prevent waste and manage their resources. In addition, it provides tips, tools, and rebates on stormwater, Fat, Oils, and Grease (FOG), and flushed trash.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Very few programs can exist without an infrastructure to support them. Funding assistance, comprehensive “one-stop-shop” resource pools, and outreach and advocacy for support at legislative or federal levels, taken together, help organizations overcome capacity obstacles that prevent them from taking climate action.

1. The [Small Business Environmental Assistance Program](#) in Minneapolis built its website as *the* one stop shop for businesses in the city as well as the state. The program has a

website that is *easy to navigate* as well as a phone line to answer questions about compliance and environmental regulation.

2. [Seattle Good Business Network](#) runs a [Youth Program](#) dedicated to connect Seattle youth, from all backgrounds and levels of experience, to meaningful learning, career, and leadership opportunities, including internship opportunities with local businesses, tours of local production spaces, panel events with local entrepreneurs and manufacturers, the Youth Board, and the Career Connected Learning Interagency Forum for industry stakeholders serving youth.
3. [Seattle Good Business Network](#) connects businesses to a network of over 600 locally owned sustainable manufacturers and the city of Seattle in an initiative called [Seattle Made](#), seeking to expand opportunities for local ownership, meaningful employment, and healthy environment. The program offers offline materials-exchange facilitation.

NATIONAL PROGRAMS

National Sustainability Assistance Programs are useful to our project because they enlighten us to examples of larger scale programs and the resources that they provide. Their structures of implementation can provide models for Columbus, and they could also be potential allies to help strengthen the Columbus program.

The [National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program](#) is affiliated with the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and can be found in Section 507 of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendment which requires each state to establish small business assistance (Small Business Resources, 2021). The services they provide include multimedia environmental compliance and pollution prevention services that reduce emissions at source, including, but not

limited to, industry-specific best practices, regulatory guidance, and funding opportunities for new environmental technologies. Overall, the National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program provides technical assistance in addition to free services like their financial assistance program and educational resources (Small Business Resources, 2021).

The [U.S. Green Chamber of Commerce's](#) core values include sustainability, innovation, and leadership. Their guiding principle is to live up to their mission and vision through interaction with stakeholders, including members, sponsors, employees, volunteers, and society as a whole. Benefits for new members include recognition on social media, access to special events, paid advertisements in their newsletter, and a 140-character listing on the membership directory page and social media. Overall, the US Green Chamber of Commerce provides services that require pay, including their business recognition program, financial assistance program, and educational resources (The “Triple Bottom Line”, 2021).

The [United States Business Council for Sustainable Development](#) (US BCSD) provides US leading businesses with a platform to design and implement sustainability solutions to carbon emissions, water quality, and waste management. They provide resources to business owners as well as free services including their business recognition program, networking opportunities, and educational resources (US BCSD, 2021).

[Green America](#) is another significant national sustainable business program. Among other programs, they have a green business network where small businesses can get a green business certification, connect with eco-concerned customers, and collaborate with other sustainable businesses. They provide technical assistance and have paid services like their

financial assistance program and additional educational resources for businesses (Green America, 2021).

Finally, the [American Sustainable Business Network](#) advocates for sustainable business policy that looks at people, planet, and profit. This is the leading business organization serving the public policy interests of responsible companies, their customers, and other stakeholders. It was founded in 2009 and its membership represents over 250,000 businesses in a wide range of industries (ASBC, 2021). They provide resources and have services that require pay including their financial assistance program and educational resources (ASBC, 2021).

Recommendations

Our research findings illustrate an opportunity for the City of Columbus to establish a program that helps businesses and nonprofits increase their capacity for advancing human wellbeing. It is also our hope that this program will be environmentally beneficial and address the threat of low capacity for commitment, as seen in our SWOT analysis. We have created a sample program design that incorporates services that the program could realistically include. Each of the recommendations complement the others and were drawn from our case studies.

The City of Columbus has shown proficiency in the implementation of several sustainability programs. As such we did not feel it necessary to include within this report directions on how to build and launch a new program, but rather chose to focus on the services that the program should provide. We have, however, included suggestions on program development, goals to include in the launch of a new program, and a list of local potential collaborators, which can be found in Appendices IV, V, and VI, respectively.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Table 1 suggests services to be incorporated into the creation of an organizational sustainability plan. The five categories, technical assistance, information, infrastructure enhancement, recognition, and networking seek to inform and equip businesses and organizations with readily available tools through a "one-stop-shop" approach. The services we suggest strive for robust public and governmental backing for organizational sustainability, and promote the directory of green businesses while increasing investment in the environment.

We believe that a comprehensive organizational plan should place a large emphasis on recognition and the promotion of businesses who have made strides to increase their sustainability. We are confident that rewarding efforts will motivate ongoing participation in such programs. Also crucial to a successful sustainability plan is the strengthening of networks between businesses and existing resources. Program services should include media platforms and social networks to foster relationships and partnerships amongst new and existing groups, leading to further collaborations and a stronger sense of community. A program cannot be successful without an infrastructure to support it so we encourage the promotion of operational funding resources to allow businesses to increase their financial capacity. For more details on suggested services please see Appendix VII.

Table 1: Suggested Services For A Columbus Organizational Sustainability Assistance Program

FOCUS AREA	WHAT	HOW	GOAL
Technical Assistance	1A. Environmental impact Assessment	- Access to real-time energy usage & impact	- Energy efficiency increase (G1) - Emission reduction (G2)
	1B. Environmental compliance checks	- "one-stop-shop" for environmental compliances - Conduct environmental compliance checks	
	1C. Clean energy	-Install on-site solar panels	

Recognition & Promotion	4A. Rating of organizational sustainability for tiered services.	- Determine tiered benefits or services. - Construct a tool to evaluate the level regularly	Motivate organizations to be more sustainable
	4B. A directory of local ethical businesses	- Solidify information of green businesses; build, promote and update the platform.	Reward local green businesses
Networking	2A. Connect stakeholders	- Construct media platforms for sharing and connecting. - Greenspot outreach effort. - Partner with <u>existing networks</u> to expand network and spur innovation.	- A sense of community - Action toward carbon neutrality: local circular organizations (G4) & green jobs (G3)
Information	5A. Up-to-date information and resources	- Compile and update information on established platforms such as "one-stop-shop."	-Informed about the means of organizational sustainability (All of goals)
	5B. Consulting	- Offer customized services, especially those that are unfamiliar with the subject	
Infrastructure	3A. "one-stop-shop"	- Compile resources & information - Construct the platform	-Accessible resources and support
	3B. Ethical operational funding	- Advocate for financial security - Fund using program budget	-Stable financial capacity. (All of goals)
	3C. Green job promotions	- Build and promote a platform to share recruitment information from stakeholders	

PROGRAM DESIGN

Our case studies demonstrate that successful assistance programs typically encompass stakeholders, services, goals & techniques, as well as a set of guiding principles, values, and a mission statement. In developing the case studies, we found five factors that were integral to the success of assistance programs. These factors are, staffing, cost of services, sources of funding, partnerships and marketing. We recommend that the City employ an adequate number of employees to manage the program, because insufficient staffing may result in the program's collapse. This was the case with a program included in our research, Best for Colorado, which closed after its only employee resigned (Alliance Center, n.d.). The majority of programs we researched focus on free services, which is due to the limited resources of small businesses and

nonprofits. For that reason, the majority of programs have a heavy reliance on funding to support the free services. Funding sources are primarily federal grants such as the (P2) Grant (Environmental Protection Agency 2021). Collaborating with existing relevant organizations will allow businesses to reach a wider audience, bridge gaps across sectors and industries, and scale impact. The program has a large potential for connecting the threads of existing fragmented resources and services in place, particularly those that have similar values or features.

Conclusion

This opportunity to create a plan for small business sustainability programs began with interviews which opened our eyes to the barriers that small businesses and nonprofits face when trying to make their business more sustainable. Researching business sustainability programs in cities throughout the US led us to a wealth of existing business assistance programs with promising features that could be incorporated into our plan. The City of Columbus has made huge strides over the last decade in the creation and implementation of sustainability programs and should strive to maintain that momentum.

Small businesses and nonprofits generally do not have the same environmental impact as many of their corporate counterparts, but the aggregate impact of operating *many* small businesses yields environmental consequences that are hard to ignore. Accomplishing environmental, social, and economic sustainability is an undertaking that must be shouldered by all businesses, regardless of size, in order to limit the impacts of climate change. Public agencies like the City of Columbus play a critical role in addressing the challenges and elevating the opportunities faced by small businesses and nonprofits. By developing well-marketed, low-cost

programs that incorporate technical assistance, recognition, information, networking, and infrastructure, the City of Columbus can emerge as a pacesetter for other sustainable cities.

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² Additional resources are hyperlinked in the Case Studies section.

Appendices














Appendix I: SWOT Analysis of Organizational Sustainability in Columbus

Strength <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and action. • Support system. • Knowledge of growth and capacities from median-large orgs. • Knowledge of social change from nonprofits. 	Weakness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main contributors to the total emissions. • “Take-Use-Waste” business models. • Inefficient operation of small businesses/nonprofits.
Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Action Plan (8 direct strategies). • Innovation from emerging social enterprises. • Public awareness and support. 	Threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralized, linear economy. • Climate change. • Covid relief, operational funding, staff. • Mobility. • Accessibility of public services.

Appendix II. Table 1: Five Assistance Categories with Descriptions

	Technical assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can partner with third-parties • Audits, compliance checks, metrics, certification, etc.
	Recognition/promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directory of local green / certified businesses. • Annual awards - expand or similar to Greenspot's • Marketing: media, events, labels, etc.
	Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with other organizations • Blog, talk series, events (e.g. forums, summits, etc), newsletters, etc.
	Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordinances & policies • News: rebutes, grants, relevant initiatives, etc, • Consulting, training, educational resources, etc.
	Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational funding and employment • Outreach • Resource pool (“one-stop-shop”) • Progress tracking and reporting. • Policy advocacy

Appendix III: Snapshot of Case Studies of Sustainability Assistance Programs in the U.S.

	Primary Assistance Category	Focus	Free Service					
State/Citywide Sustainability Programs								
Local First Arizona Sustainability			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainable Tempe			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
California green business network			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SF Environment			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Certifiably Green Denver			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Colorado Green Business Network			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Best for Colorado			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Colorado Environmental Leadership Program			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small Business Environmental Assistance Program			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Seattle good business network			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seattle Public Utilities Green Your Business			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NYC Accelerator Program			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New York Green Business Program			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pollution Prevention Institute			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nationwide Sustainability Programs								
National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
US Green Chamber of Commerce			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
US Business Council for Sustainable Development			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Green America			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
U.S. Small Business Administration			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
American Sustainable Business Council			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>







LEGEND			
	Infrastructure		Social Organizational Sustainability
	Network		Environmental Organizational Sustainability
	Recognition		Economic Organizational Sustainability
	Technical Assistance		Holistic Organizational Sustainability (All)
	Information		

Appendix IV: Proposed Process for building an organizational sustainability program

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	
Preliminary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble sources for the infrastructure of the program. Identify and connect with stakeholders.
Initialization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review case studies of assistance program success. Decide and establish primary services. Design marketing & outreach strategy.
Pilot tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screen select business owners for test runs. Prompt systems and benchmark effects. Adjust programs to compensate for shortcomings. Market the program again with a launch date.
Launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up systems for feedback for launch. Launch the program publicly. Recruit businesses and organizations.
Evaluation & Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the first quarter of the program's impacts. Improve based on the evaluation. Plan program expansion.

Appendix V: Proposed Goals And Services

FOCUS	FIRST FIVE-YEAR GOAL	FIRST TEN-YEAR GOAL	HOW
Environmental Sustainability	1A. 40% increase in energy efficiency . 2A. 30% emission reduction from commuters.	1B. 70% increase in energy efficiency . 2B. 60% emission reduction from commuters.	  
Economic Sustainability	3A. 30% Increase in green jobs . 4A. Accelerate the Climate Action Plan's goal of 20% Increase in local circular organizations .	3B. 60% Increase in green jobs . 4B. Accelerate the Climate Action Plan's goal of a 100% Increase in local circular organizations from 2030 to 2050.	  
Social Sustainability	5A. 40% of stakeholders are from minority groups . 6A. Build and strengthen a network of 200 green businesses and organizations .	5B. 50% of stakeholders are from minority groups . 6B. Build and strengthen a network of 400 green businesses and organizations.	  
Program Sustainability	7A. 10% increase in ethical operational funding per year. 8A. 50% of engaged organizations reach level four or five of organizational sustainability . 9A. Grow the program capacity by 100%	7B. 20% increase in ethical operational funding per year. 8B. 90% of engaged organizations reach level four or five of organizational sustainability . 9B. Growth the program capacity by 200%	  

LEGEND	
	Infrastructure
	Network
	Recognition
	Technical Assistance
	Information
	Program Development

Appendix VI: Table 2: Possible Collaborations/Existing Resources

PARTNERS	SECTOR	FOCUS	ASSISTANCE	DESCRIPTION	COLLAB IDEAS
<u>Small Business Development Centers of Ohio (SBDC)</u>	Public	Economy	Technical assistance	A statewide network to support small business growth through business assessment valuation, cash flow analysis, financial projections development, free one-on-one business counseling, identifying sources of capital, inventory control assessment, market feasibility and research, marketing strategy development, strategic business planning, and workshops and training programs.	1. Connect bus/orgs to their services - discounts or free as a reward? 2. help them better incorporate enr sustainability into their services.
<u>Clean Air Resource Center</u>	Public	Environment	Technical assistance	Helps businesses meet EPA regulations, particularly regarding clean air compliance, in partnership with OCAPP. Dealing with businesses that bake, brew, mill, mold, paint, print, refine, repair, treat or transport. Run by Ohio Air Quality Development Authority (OAQDA), an org helping make clean air compliance easily accessible and affordable.	Compliance assistance especially in regards to air pollution regulations.
<u>SWACO</u>	Public	Environment	Technical assistance	Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio established by the Ohio General Assembly in 1989 which created Ohio's current solid waste management planning and regulatory programs.	Help businesses better manage their materials, such as reduction, recycling, composing, etc.

<u>National Small Business Environmental Assistance Program</u>	Public	Environment	Technical assistance	Section 507 of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendment required each state establish small business assistance. They help with basic environmental compliance and sustainable business information, such as industry-specific best practices, regulatory guidance, and funding opportunities for new environmental technologies. They also connect technical assistance providers to small businesses.	1. Use as a larger blueprint for how environmental technical assistance can be carried out. 2. Collaborate on technical assistance and information.
<u>Social Ventures</u>	Nonprofit	Economy	Recognition	Support and advocate for social enterprises in Columbus. Programs include Columbus Funds - partner with SBDC for panels regarding funding - and Impact Assurance - social impact management and reporting, impact certification, storytelling, and markets. Has been partnering with SBDC	1. Tech assistance for them. 2. Help them incorporate env sustain into their services such as advising and education. 3. They help us incorporate social change/corporate social responsibility (CSR) into the strategy. 4. Promote/feature their directory.
<u>Green Spot</u>	Public	Society	Recognition	Asks households, businesses, and community groups to make pledges to conserve energy, conserve & protect water, and reduce waste. The goal is to have at least 40,000 members by the end of 2030. They achieve the goal through programs done in partnership with local partners, stakeholders, and advisory board members.	Upgrade certification program.
<u>Human Service Chamber of Franklin County</u>	Nonprofit	Society	Network	Unite and elevate over 120 health and human services nonprofits in Columbus. Their members range from food & nutrition to housing, transportation, and to youth & education	Employment welfare. promote the assistance program to the members of the chamber.
<u>ECDI</u>	Public	Economy	Network	ECDI is the single-stop resource for entrepreneurs that offers training, loans, and advice. It helps entrepreneurs innovate, get access to funding, and network with a	Helpful resources to small businesses for funding and support from the impacts of COVID-19

				multitude of education programs.	
<u>Earthshare</u>	Nonprofit	Economy	Infrastructure	Goal is to impact individuals, businesses, and nonprofits with inspiration and tools to work together for a just and sustainable world.	Funding: has delivered more than \$370 million to nonprofits and programs that improve our environment and healthy, sustainable future for all.
<u>American Sustainable Business Council</u>	Nonprofit	Economy	Infrastructure	They advocate for sustainable business policy that looks at the environment, justice, and equity.	Policy advocacy, if it is discovered through further development that more legislative changes are needed for an environment conducive to business sustainability.
<u>Small Business Compliance Assistant</u>	Public	Environment	Information	A program run by Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help small businesses understand & remain compliant with env regulations that apply to them. Free. Air quality, Water quality, Land quality. 23 employees - funded by a Solid waste disposal fee and a Recycling Grant program	1.Information: resources and knowledge on corporate compliance; 2.Tech assistance; 3. Infrastructure: specialized services and resources to businesses. Has expressed interests in collaboration.
<u>MORPC</u>	Nonprofit	All	Information	Central Ohio's regional council for more than 70 members of counties, cities, villages, townships, and regional orgs. a collaborative to drive forward sustainability agendas in areas of air quality, water quality, energy conservation, land use, urban revitalization and transportation. have robust databases and transparent reports on various resources & toolkits, dashboard, etc - that informs the public and orgs about what is at stake in Columbus.	Information or technical assistance regarding air quality, water quality, energy conservation, land use, urban revitalization, and transportation.
<u>UpRys:</u>	Private	Economy	Information	A new organization (sounds like a consulting company) that helps nonprofits and small businesses optimize their models and/or strategy to better commit to their core mission.	Consulting

<u>Community Choice Aggregation</u>	Public	Environment	Information	Partnership between sustainable columbus (clean energy columbus) and AEP energy: pool residents and small businesses together as a group to buy electricity on their behalf, providing competitive pricing and more local control over the energy sources. started this June, 100% ohio-based renewable energy	Recruitment: outreach or incentives to help businesses enroll in the program.
<u>Smart Columbus Energy, LLC</u>	Public	Environment	Information	Managed by the Columbus Partnership; private sector energy buying program that pools the energy demand of large corporate and industrial organizations in the Region to buy wind and solar energy	Recruitment: discounts or recognition to motivate and direct median-large businesses to this program in buying renewable energy.
<u>LinkUs</u>	Public	Environment	Information	Provide a complete mobility system along key regional corridors, including high capacity and advanced rapid transit, technology solutions, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and land use changes. a collaborative initiative co-sponsored by the City of Columbus, Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA), Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), and the Franklin County Board of Commissioners.	Information: accessible and sustainable alternative commuter options.
<u>Sustainable Columbus</u>	Public	Environment	Information	Under the leadership of Columbus Mayor, it focuses on optimizing internal city operations and working with external stakeholders from throughout the community to enhance and promote environmentally friendly policies throughout our community.	1. Inform: environmental regulations and ordinances, such as water & energy benchmarking ordinance. 2. Accessible information: featuring on the assistance website/resource hub using multimedia, comprehensive content, etc.
<u>Ohio Environmental Council</u>	Public	Environment	Information	Main areas of work are clean water, public lands protection, clean energy, and democracy through a bipartisan approach.	1. Information: environmental ordinances pertaining to the company's operation. 2. Stakeholder engagement: civic duties such as voting, census, and fair legislative

					districts. 3. Promote/feature their advocacy toolkit .
<u>Clean Fuels Ohio</u>	Nonprofit	Environment	Information	It improves air quality and health, reduces environmental pollution, and strengthens Ohio's economy by increasing the use of cleaner, domestic fuels and energy-saving vehicles. 16 employees plus a Board	1. Technical assistance: implementation of alternative fuels. 2. Help to ensure environmental benefits are also economic benefits. 3. Advocacy: Work with local, state, and federal legislatures to create EV and alternative fuel friendly policies. and equitable EV transitions while facilitating statewide development of EV infrastructure

Appendix VII: Suggested Services For a Columbus Organizational Sustainability Assistance Program

FOCUS AREA	WHAT	HOW	GOAL
Technical Assistance	1A. Environmental impact Assessment	- Access to real-time energy usage. - Assess and reduce environmental impacts	- Energy efficiency increase (G1) - Emission reduction (G2)
	1B. Environmental compliance checks	- Include information of environmental compliances in the "one-stop-shop". - Conduct environmental compliance checks	
	1C. Clean energy adoption	-Install on-site solar panels and conduct clean energy procurement	
Recognition & Promotion	4A. Rating of organizational sustainability for tiered services	- Determine tiered benefits or services - Construct a tool to evaluate the level regularly	Motivated organizations to be more sustainable: high-level organizational sustainability (G8) and program capacity (G9)
	4B. A directory of local ethical businesses and organizations	- Solidify information of green businesses; build, promote and update the platform	Reward local green businesses and foster a culture of "buy local: green jobs (G3), local circular organizations (G4), a green business network (G6), funding (G7), high-level organizational sustainability (G8).

Network	2A. Connect stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construct a media platform and regular events for sharing and connecting . - Could expand Greenspot outreach effort. - Partner with <u>existing networks</u> to expand network and spur innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A sense of community among engaged groups: diverse stakeholders (G5) and a network of green businesses (G6) - Collective action toward carbon neutrality: local circular organizations (G4) and green jobs (G3)
Information	5A. Up-to-date information and resources of organizational sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compile and update information related to organizational sustainability on established platforms such as "one-stop-shop". Information could be alternative commuting, energy, financial resources, regulations, economic opportunities, etc 	Informed about the means of organizational sustainability (All of goals)
	5B. Consulting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer customized services, especially those that are unfamiliar with the subject 	
Infrastructure	3A. An organizational sustainability "one-stop-shop"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compile available resources and information related to organizational sustainability - Construct the platform 	Accessible resources and support (All of goals)
	3B. Ethical operational funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocate for financial security for small businesses and nonprofits - Fund using program budget 	Stable financial capacity (All of goals)
	3C. Green job promotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build and promote a platform to share recruitment information from stakeholders 	